

FOR EVERYONE WHO HAS EVER FELT MAD ENOUGH TO WRITE A LETTER TO THE NEW YORK TIMES:

■ An inside look at how and why the letters that appear in The Times are selected....When and why the rule against anonymous letters is broken....Three kinds of letter The Times always ignores.

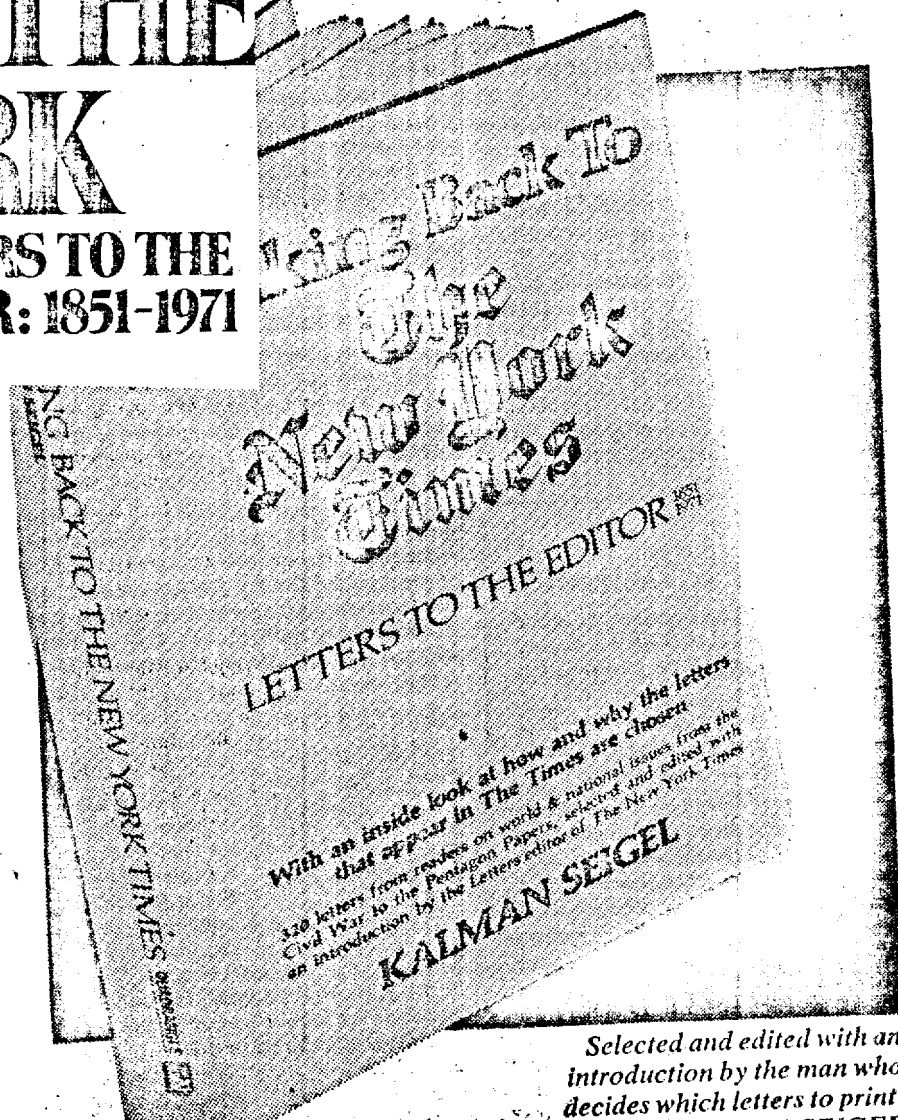
■ How to put The Times in its place—as accomplished by such masters as Spiro Agnew, Ralph Bunche, Roy Innis, Lyndon Johnson, Karl Mundt, Robert F. Kennedy, Richard M. Nixon, Mrs. Leonard Bernstein, and others less famous but equally outspoken.

■ The history of twelve decades—from before the Civil War to after the Pentagon Papers—as reflected in 320 letters from people who made history, and people who refused to remain silent while history was happening to them.

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TALKING BACK TO THE NEW YORK TIMES

LETTERS TO THE
EDITOR: 1851-1971



Selected and edited with an
introduction by the man who
decides which letters to print,

KALMAN SEIGEL

23 JUN 1971

Letters to the Editor

Dossier Dictatorship

To the Editor:

There comes a time in every nation's history when that nation must begin to question why it exists, for whom does it exist, and what changes are necessary in order to insure its future existence.

As to the first two, the answers are easily ascertained. But the latter proposition requires introspection.

Within the past month there have been a great many people talking about the impending danger of Government-sponsored secret organizations and the threat that those organizations may have on the stability of America — F.B.I., C.I.A., J. Edgar Hoover, *et al.*

Among those crying out in the wilderness are Michigan law professor Arthur R. Miller and Senator Sam Ervin. They have been crying out for a long time, but only now are they being heard. We are coming dangerously close to a "dossier dictatorship" as predicted by Professor Miller.

This new revelation has hit such individuals as Senator Ed Muskie, Representative Hale Boggs, *et al.* With the recent "coup" on the F.B.I. files in Pennsylvania, it became quite evident that the trusted bureaucracy of J. Edgar Hoover has now turned upon those who "march to the beat of a different drum" to preserve his future and protect this country.

For example, Senator Muskie, Representative Boggs and my former employer and friend Senator Hubert H. Humphrey—no doubt because of his liberal views on various issues—have fallen victims to the lurking evil of the "dossier dictatorship." Such activities on the part of the F.B.I., C.I.A., *et al.*, have a "chilling effect" on First Amendment rights.

Yet, despite the incantations of many people, the director of the C.I.A., Richard Helms, tells the American public that such agencies as the C.I.A. are "necessary to the survival of a democratic society" and goes on to ask the nation to "take it on faith that we too are honorable men devoted to their service."

Mr. Helms' reasoning is tragic. It recalls Lord Acton's historic warning on power: "Power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely."

America must be awakened from her deep slumber and realize the frightening nightmare she has been having is a potential reality—an imminent reality.

We must realize that the Peters of the country do not shout wolf for want of a wolf: A wolf does exist in the form of J. Edgar Hoover, the F.B.I., Army Intelligence, the C.I.A., *et al.*

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Letters to the Editor

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Confidence in the C.I.A.

To the Editor:

Richard Helms's defense of the C.I.A. [news story April 15] is thoughtful and intelligent but bypasses an essential point. He rightly recognizes the conflicts of values and procedures inherent in an open society's operating an organization that deals in secret information.

He suggests the conflict is satisfactorily accommodated by assuming that the C.I.A. is composed of honorable men and noting that it is subject to the review of critics and assessors, notably the National Security Council and the cognate committees of Congress.

These measures no doubt are the best we can devise. They would engender more reassurance, however, if they were not exactly the same ones on which the public has previously been asked to rely, only to learn later that we had been deceived.

The C.I.A. hardly has authority to insist that other Government agencies try to be more consistently candid. It may not even be able to insist that, when other agencies use the intelligence furnished by the C.I.A., they do so in a way that does not deceive or mislead the public.

However, its director could have contributed to general understanding, within Government and without, that confidence in such very important operations as the C.I.A. is shaken by any mismanagements of truth, wherever they occur.

GEOFFREY C. HAZARD Jr.
Professor of Law, Yale University
New Haven, April 15, 1971